



March 16, 2001

Dear State Health Official:

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program has provided opportunity for eligible children to be vaccinated at reduced or no cost since 1994. More than 43,000 enrolled providers offer VFC vaccine to eligible children. Private and public providers and organizations participating in the VFC program have achieved significant improvements in immunization rates. In addition, by supplying vaccine direct to providers and by reducing or eliminating cost as a barrier to vaccination, the VFC program has helped to identify children with a medical home. Approximately 36% of children, from birth through age 18 years, are eligible for the VFC program.

The VFC program continues to expand in operations, participants, and program challenges. Once again it is time to bring key partners together to reflect upon the direction, accomplishments, and expectations for the VFC program. During July 2001 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Care Financing Administration will co-sponsor three regional VFC workshops. The purpose of these workshops is to provide updated program information, policy guidance, and to share successful implementation strategies in individual States. The workshop agenda will be based on suggestions received from Immunization and Medicaid staff who implement the VFC program. Topics will include vaccine management, supply and accountability, program evaluation, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and other VFC-related subjects.

The VFC IV regional workshops will be held at the following locations and dates:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Invited Regions</u>
Salt Lake City, UT	July 17-18	Regions VIII, IX, and X
Richmond, VA	July 23-24	Regions I, II, III, and IV
Dallas, TX	July 30-31	Regions V, VI, VII

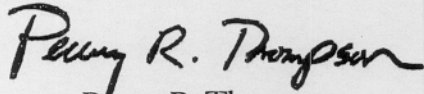
Individuals who should attend include State Medicaid and SCHIP personnel, Immunization Program Managers, Public Health Advisors, VFC Coordinators, health care providers, vaccine management staff, Immunization Program Field Representatives, and other interested parties.

Participants are encouraged to attend the training session planned for their region. This will allow them the opportunity to interact with colleagues from neighboring states and HCFA personnel stationed in the appropriate Regional Offices. A registration

form for the workshops is enclosed. Each staff person who will attend the workshops should complete and submit a separate registration form no later than May 1, 2001.

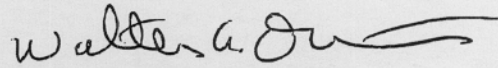
Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you or your staff have any questions regarding the VFC IV workshops please contact a VFC program consultant at (404) 639-8222.

Sincerely,



Penny R. Thompson
Acting Director
Center for Medicaid and State Operations
Health Care Financing Administration

Sincerely,



Walter A. Orenstein, M.D.
Assistant Surgeon General
Director
National Immunization Program
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Enclosure

cc:

State Immunization Program Managers

State VFC Coordinators

CDC/NIP Regional Outreach Consultants

NIP/ISD/PSB VFC Program Consultants

NIP/ISD/POB Immunization Program Consultants

All HCFA Regional Administrators

All HCFA Associate Regional Administrators
for Medicaid and State Operations

Lee Partridge
Director, Health Policy Unit
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